

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Amend claims 1, 4, 20-22, 24, and 40, as follows.

**Listing of Claims:**

1           **1. (Currently amended)** A work-management method  
2           comprising:  
3                 for a future point in time, determining a probability of availability  
4                 of each resource of a plurality of resources at said future point in time;  
5                 time, to obtain the probabilities of availability of the plurality of the  
6                 resources;  
7                 combining together the determined probabilities of availability of  
8                 the plurality of resources to obtain a number that is a result of the  
9                 combining; and  
10               using the number to schedule new tasks for the resources for  
11               the future point in time.

1           **2. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 1 wherein:  
2               using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
3               scheduling for the future point in time no more than the number  
4               of the new tasks to become available for servicing by the plurality of the  
5               resources.

1           **3. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 2 wherein:  
2               combining together the determined probabilities comprises  
3               summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1           **4. (Currently amended)** The method of claim 1 wherein:

2           determining at the probability of availability of each resource  
3   comprises  
4           determining an amount of time  $t$  that each resource of the  
5   plurality of resources has been servicing a task by now;  
6           for each of the resources, determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of  
7   the resource servicing its task to completion within a total amount of time  
8    $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
9           for each of the resources, determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the  
10   resource completing servicing its task by now; and  
11           for each of the resources, determining a probability  $P$  that the  
12   resource will complete servicing its task at the future point in time the  
13   amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ .

1           **5. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 4 in a call  
2   center wherein:  
3           the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4           using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
5           in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate or  
6   cancel an outbound call.

1           **6. (Previously presented)** A work-management method  
2   comprising:  
3           determining an amount of time  $t$  that a resource has been  
4   servicing a task by now;  
5           determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing the  
6   task to completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount  
7   of time;  
8           determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing  
9   servicing the task by now;

10           determining a probability  $P$  that the resource will complete  
11   servicing the task within the amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ ;

12   and

13           in response to  $P$ , scheduling another task for servicing.

1           **7. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2           scheduling comprises  
3           in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate said  
4   another task.

1           **8. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 6 in a call  
2   center wherein:  
3           the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4           scheduling comprises  
5           in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate an  
6   outbound call.

1           **9. (Original)** The method of claim 6 further comprising:  
2           performing the determining steps for a plurality of resources,  
3   and  
4           determining a number of the resources that will likely have  
5   completed servicing their respective tasks within the amount of time  $h$   
6   from now as a sum of the probabilities  $P$  determined for individual ones of  
7   the plurality of resources; wherein  
8           scheduling comprises  
9           in response to determining the number of the resources,  
10   scheduling new tasks for servicing.

1           **10. (Original)** The method of claim 9 wherein:

2 scheduling tasks for servicing comprises scheduling no more  
3 than the number of the tasks for servicing.

1           **11. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2           determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3           obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and  
4           from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t+h)$ ;  
5           and  
6           determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
7           from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t)$ .

1           **12. (Original)** The method of claim 11 wherein:  
2           obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
3           obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4           resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1           **13. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2           determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3           obtaining historical task-completion statistics,  
4           fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime closed-form  
5           cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of the  
6           distribution, and  
7           evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
8           the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$  ; and  
9           determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
10           evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
11           the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1           **14. (Original)** The method of claim 13 wherein:  
2           obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises

3                   obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4   resources on servicing tasks to completion;  
5                   the cumulative-probability distribution  $F$  comprises a Weibull  
6   distribution; and  
7                   the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a  
8   parameter of central tendency.

1                 **15. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                 determining an amount of time  $t$  comprises  
3                 determining the amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been  
4   servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks; and  
5                 determining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
6                 determining the historical task-completion statistics for the one  
7   type of tasks.

1                 **16. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                 scheduling another task comprises  
3                 in response to  $P$  initiating preparation of a task that may require  
4   servicing by an agent at a later time.

1                 **17. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:  
2                 determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3                 obtaining a historical histogram for task completion, and  
4                 evaluating a cumulative said probability with the obtained  
5   histogram for the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
6                 determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
7                 evaluating the cumulative probability with the obtained  
8   histogram for the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1                 **18. (Original)** The method of claim 6 wherein:

2 scheduling comprises  
3 in response to *P*, canceling preparation of a task that could  
4 require servicing by a resource.

1 19. **(Canceled)**

1 20. **(Currently amended)** A computer-readable medium  
2 containing instructions which, when executed in a computer, cause the  
3 computer to perform the steps of:  
4 for a future point in time, determining a probability of availability  
5 of each resource of a plurality of resources at said future point in time;  
6 time, to obtain the probabilities of availability of the plurality of the  
7 resources;  
8 combining together the determined probabilities of availability of  
9 the plurality of resources to obtain a number that is a result of the  
10 combining; and  
11 using the number to schedule new tasks for the resources for  
12 the future point in time.

1 21. **(Currently amended)** A work-management apparatus  
2 comprising:  
3 a storage medium for storing instructions, and  
4 a processor for executing the instructions, the medium and the  
5 processor together comprising:  
6 computer means for determining, for a future point in time, a  
7 probability of availability of each resource of a plurality of resources at said  
8 future point in time; time, to obtain the probabilities of availability of the  
9 plurality of the resources;  
10 computer means cooperative with the determining means for  
11 combining together the determined probabilities of availability of the

12       plurality of resources to obtain a number that is a result of the combining;  
13       and  
14               means cooperative with the means for combining the  
15       determined probabilities, for scheduling ~~for the future point in time~~ no more  
16       than the obtained number of new tasks ~~for servicing to be serviced~~ by the  
17       plurality of the resources at the future point in time.

1               **22. (Currently amended)** A work-management apparatus  
2 comprising:

3               a storage medium for storing instructions, and  
4               a processor for executing the instructions, the medium and the  
5       processor together comprising:

6               means for determining an amount of time  $t$  that a resource has  
7       been servicing a task by now;

8               computer means cooperative with the time-determining means  
9       for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing the task to  
10      completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
11               computer means cooperative with the time-determining means  
12       for determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing servicing the  
13      task by now;

14               computer means cooperative with both of the probability-  
15      determining means for determining a probability  $P$  that the resource will  
16      complete servicing the task within the amount of time  $h$  from now as

$$\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}; \text{ and}$$

18               means cooperative with the  $P$ -determining means and  
19      responsive to  $P$  for scheduling another task for servicing.

1               **23. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 21  
2 wherein:

3                   the means for combining together the determined probabilities  
4   comprise  
5                   means for summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1                   **24. (Currently amended)** The apparatus of claim 21 wherein:  
2                   the means for determining ~~at~~the probability of availability of  
3   each resource comprise  
4                   means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
5   resources, an amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been servicing a task  
6   by now;  
7                   means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
8   resources, a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing its task to  
9   completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
10                  means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
11   resources, a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing servicing its task  
12   by now; and  
13                  means for determining, for each resource of the plurality of  
14   resources, a probability  $P$  that the resource will complete servicing its task  
15   at the future point in time the amount of time  $h$  from now as  
16                  
$$\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$$
.

1                   **25. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 21 in a  
2   call center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   the means for scheduling comprise  
5                   means responsive to  $P$ , for determining whether or not to  
6   initiate or cancel an outbound call.

1                   **26. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:

3           the means for scheduling comprise  
4           means responsive to  $P$ , for determining whether or not to  
5   initiate said another task.

1           **27. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22 in a  
2   call center wherein:  
3           the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4           the means for scheduling comprise  
5           means responsive to  $P$ , for determining whether or not to  
6   initiate an outbound call.

1           **28. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:  
3           the means for determining an amount of time  $t$  comprise  
4           means for determining the amount of time  $t$  for each of a  
5   plurality of resources;  
6           the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
7           means for determining the probability  $F(t+h)$  for each of the  
8   plurality of resources;  
9           the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
10          means for determining the probability  $F(t)$  for each of the  
11   plurality of resources, and  
12          means for determining a number of the plurality of resources  
13   that will likely have completed servicing their respective tasks within the  
14   amount of time  $h$  from now as a sum of the probabilities  $P$  determined for  
15   individual ones of the plurality of resources; and  
16          the means for scheduling comprise  
17          means responsive to determining the number of the resources,  
18   for scheduling new tasks for servicing.

1                   **29. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 28  
2       wherein:  
3                   the means for scheduling comprise  
4                   means for scheduling no more than the number of the tasks for  
5       servicing.

1                   **30. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2       wherein:  
3                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
4                   means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and  
5                   means for determining the probability  $F(t+h)$  from the obtained  
6       statistics; and  
7                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
8                   means for determining the probability  $F(t)$  from the obtained  
9       statistics.

1                   **31. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 30  
2       wherein:  
3                   the means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics  
4       comprise  
5                   means for obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically  
6       spent by resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1                   **32. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2       wherein:  
3                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
4                   means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics,  
5                   means for fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime  
6                   closed-form cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of  
7       the distribution, and

8               means for evaluating the distribution with the determined  
9   parameters and the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
10              the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
11              means for evaluating the distribution with the determined  
12   parameters and the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1               **33. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 32  
2   wherein:  
3              the means for obtaining historical task-completion statistics  
4   comprise  
5              means for obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically  
6   spent by resources on servicing tasks to completion;  
7              the cumulative-probability distribution  $F$  comprises a Weibull  
8   distribution; and  
9              the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a  
10   parameter of central tendency.

1               **34. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:  
3              the means for determining an amount of time  $t$  comprise  
4              means for determining the amount of time  $t$  that the resource  
5   has been servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks;  
6   and  
7              the means for determining historical task-completion statistics  
8   comprise  
9              means for determining the historical task-completion statistics  
10   for the one type of tasks.

1               **35. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2   wherein:  
3              the means for scheduling another task comprise

4                   means responsive to  $P$  for initiating preparation of a task that  
5        may require servicing by an agent at a later time.

1                   **36. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2        wherein:  
3                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprise  
4                   means for obtaining a historical histogram for task completion,  
5        and  
6                   means for evaluating a cumulative said probability with the  
7        obtained histogram for the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
8                   the means for determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprise  
9                   means for evaluating the cumulative probability with the  
10      obtained histogram for the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1                   **37. (Previously presented)** The apparatus of claim 22  
2        wherein:  
3                   the means for scheduling comprise  
4                   means responsive to  $P$ , for canceling preparation of a task that  
5        could require servicing by a resource.

1                   **38. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 20 wherein:  
2                   using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
3                   scheduling for the future point in time no more than the number  
4        of the new tasks to become available for servicing by the plurality of the  
5        resources.

1                   **39. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 38 wherein:  
2                   combining together the determined probabilities comprises  
3                   summing the probabilities to obtain the number.

1                   **40. (Currently amended)** The medium of claim 20 wherein:

2               determining at the probability of availability of each resource  
3               comprises  
4               for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining an  
5               amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been servicing a task by now;  
6               for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining a  
7               probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing its task to completion within a  
8               total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount of time;  
9               for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining a  
10          probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing servicing its task by now; and  
11          for each resource of the plurality of resources, determining a  
12          probability  $P$  that the resource will complete servicing its task at the future  
13          point in time the amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ .

1               **41. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 40 for a call  
2               center wherein:  
3               the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4               using the number to schedule new tasks comprises  
5               in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate or  
6               cancel an outbound call.

1               **42. (Previously presented)** A computer-readable medium  
2               containing instructions which, when executed in a computer, cause the  
3               computer to perform the steps of:  
4               determining an amount of time  $t$  that a resource has been  
5               servicing a task by now;  
6               determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  of the resource servicing the  
7               task to completion within a total amount of time  $t+h$ , where  $h$  is an amount  
8               of time;

9                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  of the resource completing  
10   servicing the task by now;  
11                   determining a probability  $P$  that the resource will complete  
12   servicing the task within the amount of time  $h$  from now as  $\frac{F(t+h) - F(t)}{1 - F(t)}$ ;  
13   and  
14                   in response to  $P$ , scheduling another task for servicing.

1                  **43. (Previously presented)** The method of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   scheduling comprises  
3                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate said  
4   another task.

1                  **44. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 for a call  
2   center wherein:  
3                   the new tasks comprise calls; and  
4                   scheduling comprises  
5                   in response to  $P$ , determining whether or not to initiate an  
6   outbound call.

1                  **45. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 further  
2   comprising instructions which, when executed in the computer, cause the  
3   computer to perform the steps of:  
4                   performing the determining steps for a plurality of resources,  
5   and  
6                   determining a number of the resources that will likely have  
7   completed servicing their respective tasks within the amount of time  $h$   
8   from now as a sum of the probabilities  $P$  determined for individual ones of  
9   the plurality of resources; wherein  
10                  scheduling comprises

11                   in response to determining the number of the resources,  
12   scheduling new tasks for servicing.

1                  **46. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 45 wherein:  
2                   scheduling tasks for servicing comprises scheduling no more  
3                   than the number of the tasks for servicing.

1                  **47. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3                   obtaining historical task-completion statistics, and  
4                   from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t+h)$ ;  
5                  and  
6                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
7                   from the obtained statistics determining the probability  $F(t)$ .

1                  **48. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 47 wherein:  
2                   obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
3                   obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4                  resources on servicing tasks to completion.

1                  **49. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3                   obtaining historical task-completion statistics,  
4                   fitting the task-completion statistics into a lifetime closed-form  
5                   cumulative-probability distribution to determine parameters of the  
6                  distribution, and  
7                   evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
8                   the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$  ; and  
9                   determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises  
10                  evaluating the distribution with the determined parameters and  
11                  the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1           50. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 49 wherein:  
2           obtaining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
3           obtaining a mean and a variance of time historically spent by  
4           resources on servicing tasks to completion;  
5           the cumulative-probability distribution  $F$  comprises a Weibull  
6           distribution; and  
7           the parameters comprise a dispersion parameter and a  
8           parameter of central tendency.

1           51. **(Previously presented)** The method of claim 42 wherein:  
2           determining an amount of time  $t$  comprises  
3           determining the amount of time  $t$  that the resource has been  
4           servicing a task of one of a plurality of different types of tasks; and  
5           determining historical task-completion statistics comprises  
6           determining the historical task-completion statistics for the one  
7           type of tasks.

1           52. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2           scheduling another task comprises  
3           in response to  $P$  initiating preparation of a task that may require  
4           servicing by an agent at a later time.

1           53. **(Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2           determining a probability  $F(t+h)$  comprises  
3           obtaining a historical histogram for task completion, and  
4           evaluating a cumulative said probability with the obtained  
5           histogram for the total amount of time  $t+h$  to obtain  $F(t+h)$ ; and  
6           determining a probability  $F(t)$  comprises

7                   evaluating the cumulative probability with the obtained  
8   histogram for the amount of time  $t$  to obtain  $F(t)$ .

1                   **54. (Previously presented)** The medium of claim 42 wherein:  
2                   scheduling comprises  
3                   in response to  $P$ , canceling preparation of a task that could  
4                   require servicing by a resource.